



State Ethics Commission of Georgia

ADVISORY OPINION NO. 1990-24
January 19, 1991

SUBJECT: PLACEMENT OF CAMPAIGN SIGNS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

REAL OR HYPOTHETICAL SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES:

ABC Oil Company operates a service station at a busily traveled intersection in a metropolitan area. The property is commercially zoned. The owner of ABC Oil Company supports a candidate and has suggested that the candidate place a large sign at this intersection because it would be visible by several thousand people each day as they travel the highway and those who patronized his place of business. Is the candidate required to report the use of this real estate where he is placing the campaign sign as a campaign contribution?

Would the same be true if the owner was allowing a sign to be placed on the front yard of his residence?

ADVISORY OPINION

The permission to place campaign signs on private property is a contribution to a political campaign if the use of such property has any ascertainable value. If such signs can be observed by anyone from public rights-of-way or roadways, it will be deemed that such allowance of use of any property which is zoned Commercial or which would be traditionally considered Commercial in nature to be of some ascertainable value. Therefore, permission to place such campaign signs on "Commercial" property should be reported as an "in kind" contribution.

The permission to place "yard signs" will be deemed not to have any commercially ascertainable value and therefore, will not have to be reported as an "in kind" contribution. "Yard signs" are defined as campaign signs which are 36" x 36" or smaller on Residentially zoned property or property which would traditionally be considered Residential in nature.